

REMARKS

Applicant has studied the Office Action dated December 2, 2004. It is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Claims 1-19 are pending. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims in view of the following remarks are respectfully requested.

In response to the restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C. § 121, Applicant provisionally elects for continued prosecution of the Group I claims (i.e., claims 1-12) drawn to methods for manufacturing integrated circuits, with traverse. Thus, Applicant requests examination of claims 1-12. Applicant expressly reserves the right to later file a divisional application directed to the non-elected claims if this restriction requirement is not later withdrawn.


Applicant traverses the restriction requirement and respectfully submits that claims 13-19 are not distinct from the elected species. The claims of the elected species are drawn to methods for manufacturing integrated circuits, and claims 13-19 are drawn to machine-readable media encoded with programs for performing certain methods for manufacturing integrated circuits. More specifically, claims 1-12 of the elected species each recite a "method for contact opening definition for active element electrical connections," and claims 13-19 each recite a "machine-readable medium encoded with a program for contact opening definition for active element electrical connections." The integrated circuit manufacturing steps recited in claims 13-19 are identical to the integrated circuit manufacturing steps recited in claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, and 11 of the elected species. Thus, Applicant submits that the machine-readable media of claims 13-19 cannot be used to manufacture an integrated circuit by a process that is materially different than the processes of the elected species. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the restriction requirement should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application and the claims are in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (561) 989-9811 should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the application.

Date: March 1, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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